

The Caboose Who Got Loose

by Bill Peet

Children will love this bumpy, jolting ride as they follow a caboose through the beautiful country side and through the heart of a busy train depot.



Read

Before:

Introduce the book and tell the children a little bit about it. Follow that with a comment or question that is related to the story such as, *What would you do if you ever got lost?* Encourage a discussion so the children can comment, ask questions, and express their feelings. Set the stage for listening by asking an "I wonder" statement based on the cover illustration.

- I wonder what happened to make the caboose fly in the air?

During:

Encourage the children to comment on the illustrations, ask questions, and predict what will happen next in the story. Children gain confidence and a sense of achievement through being able to correctly predict how a story will end. Point out "rare words" (e.g., those words that are not commonly used in every day conversation) and help the children relate the meaning in a way that makes sense to them.

Rare Words in *The Caboose Who Got Loose*

- rambled: to have, follow or proceed along a winding or often changing course
- steamers: a boat or ship that is powered by a steam engine or engines
- smokestacks: a funnel on the boiler of a locomotive that releases gases from the engine
- freight: goods or cargo carried by a commercial means of transportation
- lumbered: to burden somebody with something unpleasant or unwanted
- caboose: the last train car on a freight train
- ramshackle: badly built or rundown
- scurried: to move at a hurried pace, usually with small fast steps
- perched: a place for a bird to land or rest
- canyon: a deep narrow valley with steep sides, often with a stream running through it
- boulders: a large round rock
- gigantic: very large, tall or bulky
- dreaded: inspiring great fear
- grades: the level at which the ground meets a building or mountain
- ledges: a flat surface projecting from a rock face
- lurked: move or wait furtively or wait in a concealed position or a shadowy corner
- turmoil: an event causing confusion
- crisscrossing: running in different directions across each other, back and forth
- jumble: put things out of order, confuse things
- unhitched: unfasten something that is connected to something else
- scenery: landscape or natural surroundings
- machinery: machines collectively or in general
- pistons: metal cylinder sliding within a tube
- boiler: water-heating tank in which water is heated and stored
- valves: device that controls liquid flow
- dreary: dull and gloomy
- switchman: somebody who controls switching of trains
- coupler: connector for railroad cars
- unsteady: staggering or tottering in walking
- disaster: damaging or destructive event
- crane: a large machine used to lift and move heavy objects by means of a hook

After:

Discuss the story. Ask questions...

- Why didn't Katy Caboose like being attached to the train?
- What did Katy wish she could be instead of a caboose?
- Why did Katy want to be a house?
- What did Katy Caboose want to be above all other things?
- What scared Katy about being on the back of the train?
- Why didn't Katy like the train depot?
- What building wished that he was a caboose?
- Why did Katy start feeling better about being a caboose?
- What happened to Katy when she went over the mountain?
- Did they ever find Katy Caboose? How did Katy feel about being stuck in the tree?



Do

Train Shapes

After reading the story, hand out the *The Shape Train* sheet. Read the instructions and help the children draw the correct shape in each train car. Once all the shapes are complete, the children can color the rest of the train cars.

My Name: _____

The Shape Train

In each train car, trace the shape and then draw the same shape in the space provided.

